MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Background:

Martin Luther King, Jr., is a well-known southern Negro leader who is President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and is Copastor with his father of the Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta, Georgia. He was born in Atlanta on January 15, 1929. King became nationally prominent during 1955 and 1956 when he organized a protest that ended bus segregation in Montgomery, Alabama. As a result of his activities in racial matters, he has been arrested on numerous occasions by local officials and charged with misdemeanors. Throughout his efforts in the racial field he has stressed nonviolent action.

Subversive Connections and Associations:

"The Worker," an east coast communist newspaper, issue of November 6, 1960, carried an article entitled "Sobell Parley Called." According to this article widespread appeals on behalf of freedom for Morton Sobell were scheduled and would be climaxed at a national gathering in Washington, D. C., from November 19, 1960, through November 21, 1960. Among those who sponsored the national gathering was Martin Luther King, Jr.

"The Worker" issue of November 27, 1960, carried an article entitled "1200 Clerics urge Ike Free Sobell." The article listed King as one of those sponsoring an appeal to the President to urge a new trial for Morton Sobell or grant him clemency by commutation of sentence.

Morton Sobell was convicted on April 5, 1951, in the United States District Court, Southern District of New York, for violation of Espionage Conspiracy statute and was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

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The January 16, 1961, issue of the "National Guardian" carried an article entitled "Abolish The Un-Americans." This article indicated a petition was directed to the 87th Congress asking for the abolishment of the House Committee on Un-American Activities. Among the signers of this petition was the name of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

The "Atlanta Journal," a daily newspaper in Atlanta, Georgia, on February 23, 1961, carried an article entitled "Highlanders and Dr. King Join Forces." This article stated that the Atlanta SCLC, headed by Martin Luther King, Jr., and the "Tennessee Controversial Highlanders Folk School" had joined forces to train Negro leaders for the southern civil rights struggle. This article indicated that a Tennessee State Court revoked the school's charter after a legislative investigation charged that communists had lectured there.

The "New York Post," a New York daily newspaper, in the issue of May 2, 1961, carried an article which indicated the name of Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., of Atlanta, Georgia, was listed on a petition requesting President John F. Kennedy to invoke executive clemency for Carl Braden and Frank Wilkinson.

Mrs. Alberta Ahearn, a self-admitted member of the Communist Party, Louisville, Kentucky, in testifying on December 11 and 13, 1954, in Jefferson County, Kentucky, Criminal Court, in a State Sedition prosecution against Carl Braden identified Braden as having been known to her as a member of the Communist Party from 1951 until the time of her testimony. The "Courier-Journal," Louisville, Kentucky, a daily newspaper, on February 3, 1959, carried an article indicating that Carl Braden had been sentenced to one year in prison on a charge of contempt of Congress for his refusal to answer questions before the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

"The New York Times," a daily newspaper, in the issue of January 24, 1959, carried an article to the effect that Frank Wilkinson was sentenced by the United States District Court, Atlanta, Georgia, to a year in jail for contempt of Congress for refusing to answer questions before the House Committee on Un-American Activities.

The August 25, 1961, issue of "New America," an official publication of the Socialist Party - Social Democratic Federation, carried an article entitled, "Prominent Americans Seek Pardon Junius Scales." He was sentenced to six years in prison under the Smith Act. Among those who joined this effort and who signed the petition urging suspension or reduction of Scales sentence was Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

On September 7, 1961, a testimonial dinner was held in honor of Henry Winston in the Skyline Ballroom of the Hotel Theresa, 125th Street, 7th Avenue, New York, New York. One of the speakers at this testimonial was Martin Luther King, Jr. At the time of the testimonial Henry Winston was publicly known as a member of the Communist Party, USA, National Committee and Vice-Chairman of the Communist Party, USA.

The November, 1963, issue of "Through to Victory" published in Ridgecrest, California, carried an article by Carl Prussion entitled "Communist Planned Tactics of King, N.A.A.C.P." In this article Prussion made the statement that Martin Luther King, Jr., and the N.A.A.C.P. were being influenced by communist generated revolutionary tactics. Prussion identified himself as a former counterspy for the FBI from 1947 to 1960. He made the statement that Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., was always set forth at communist meetings as the individual to whom communists should look and rally around in the communist struggle on the many racial issues. In a sworn affidavit Prussion made the statement "I hereby also state that Martin Luther King, Jr., has either been a member of or wittingly has accepted support from communist fronts, individuals, and/or organizations which gave aid to or espouse communist causes, numbering over 60."

The March, 1963, issue of the "Southern Patriot," the official publication of the Southern Conference Educational Fund, which is the successor of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, an organization cited by the House Committee on Un-American Activities as a Communist Party front group, has several pictures of Martin Luther King, Jr., at an affair described as an annual reception for New York friends of the Southern Conference Educational Fund. The main speaker for this affair was Martin Luther King, Jr.

The "National Enquirer," published in New York, New York, on April 5, 1964, carried a column entitled "Washington Pipeline" by John Henshaw. This column contained a paragraph as follows: "Martin Luther King, Jr., isn't happy about the detailed report that FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover has compiled about some of his past associations with communists. In order to limit the FBI's future role in civil rights investigations King has launched a backstage campaign to get President Johnson to transfer the authority to U. S. Treasury Department Law Enforcement Agencies and to especially established Corps of U. S. Marshals."

The "Atlanta Constitution," an Atlanta, Georgia, daily newspaper, on July 25, 1963, carried an article entitled "Onetime Communist Organizer Heads Rev. King's Office in N.Y." This article indicated that Jack H. O'Dell was Director of the New York office of the SCLC. This article identified O'Dell as being in the Communist Party as late as 1958. It was indicated that O'Dell was also known as Hunter Pitts O'Dell at one time and that he had been identified as a member of the National Committee of the Communist Party, USA.

The "Washington Post and Times Herald," a Washington, D. C., daily newspaper, on April 15, 1964,

carried a column entitled "Matter of Fact," by Joseph Alsop. This article stated, "The subject of real head shaking is the Rev. Martin Luther King. His influence is very great. His original dedication to nonviolence can hardly be doubted. Yet, he has accepted and is almost certainly still accepting communist collaboration and even communist advice.

"In 1962-63 the issue of the communist role in the King organization was raised because of Hunter Pitts O'Dell commonly called Jack O'Dell. This man, a known communist, held posts in the Southern Christian Leadership Council, first in the South and then in the New York office, until the late Spring of 1963. King finally dropped him when he was warned by United States Government officials that O'Dell was the genuine communist article.

"Official warnings have been given to King about another, even more important associate who is known to be a key figure in the Covert apparatus of the Communist Party. After the warning, King broke off his open connections with this man, but a secondhand connection nonetheless continues."

The "Jackson Daily News" printed in Jackson, Mississippi, on May 18, 1964, carried an article entitled "Charges King Accepted Money From Group Labeled Subversive." This article indicated that in a speech to the North Jackson Exchange Club, Erle Johnston, Jr., Director of the State Sovereignty Commission said Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., had accepted money from an organization labeled as subversive in spite of his claims that his SCLC "investigates any leaders" charged with communistic associations. Johnston showed members of this club a photostatic copy of a check made out to King by the Southern Conference Educational Fund, Incorporated, of New Orleans. He pointed out in his speech that this was the successor organization to the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, which had been branded as subversive by both the House Committee on Un-American Activities and Senate Internal Security Committee.

One of the associates of Martin Luther King, who was publicly identified as one of the leaders of the "March on Washington," was Bayard Rustin.

According to an article in the August 30, 1963, Washington, D. C., "Evening Star," a Washington, D. C., daily newspaper, captioned "Rustin Rights Actionist, Press On," Bayard Rustin joined the Young Communist League (YCL) in 1936 while attending the College of the City of New York. This article continued that he quit the YCL after four years and he later "served 28 months in prison for being a conscientious objector."

The "New York Herald Tribune," a New York daily newspaper, for August 14, 1963, is an article entitled "Thurmond Assails a Leader of March," reports that in addition to Rustin's past communist activities he was "convicted in 1953 for sex perversion." Rustin reportedly "declined to comment on the morals charge which was lodged against him in California and which involved two other men."